

Rapport

Editorial

Dr Ester Cole

In a recent CRHSPP Board meeting, members were privileged to hear Judge Ted Ormston's views on mental health issues and needed services. He presided for years in Toronto provincial courts, where he gained daily insight into the relationship between mental disorders and criminal behaviours. He was involved in the creation of a special Mental Health Court, and was a key leader in facilitating treatment for offenders. Judge Ormston was seconded to head Ontario's Consent and Capacity Board. The tribunal's mandate is to decide whether individuals can be safely released into communities, or whether they require involuntary placement in psychiatric institutions. He was chair of the Advisory Committee- Mental Health and the Law-Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Judge Ormston is a sought after speaker on mental health issues across Canada and internationally. He provides a strong voice for psychological prevention and intervention services. His life's work has been acknowledged by CPA in 2011, when Judge Ormston was the recipient of CPA's Humanitarian Award.

- Judge Ted Ormston's paper "The Mental Health Strategy for Canada Changing Directions, Changing Lives - a Commentary on the Paradigm Shift in Treating Mental Health Problems and Illnesses", provides an advocacy framework for the future and highlights the role of psychology in it.
- The CRHSPP board's sub-committee consulted about the importance of continuing education avenues provincially and nationally. Dr. Teresa Sztaba's paper "Continuing Education Highlights (or Opportunity?)" addresses this ever timely issue.
- The Helpful Websites section summarizes information about free resources offered to communities by The Psychology Foundation of Canada. PFC's primary prevention orientation has been effective over the years in "giving psychology away".

CRHSPP members are encouraged to provide feedback, and share their publications in future issues. Please send your papers (in English or French) to ester.cole@sympatico.ca.



Continuing Education Highlight (or Opportunity?)

**Teresa Sztaba, Ph.D., C.Psych.
CRHSP Registrant and Board Member**

On behalf of our registrants, CRHSP was able to negotiate an excellent opportunity for registrants to participate in the free online continuing education offered by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.

A review of the articles available revealed a number of relevant and stimulating articles, by experts in their fields. As a service to our registrants, we will be highlighting some of these offerings in this and upcoming newsletters.



In the newly released report of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the importance of the "Recovery Model" is emphasized. The Mental Health Commission concluded that a strictly medical model simply is not sufficient for the complex and multifaceted needs of the Canadian consumer of mental health services. Judge T. Ormston, who was the advisory committee chair-Mental Health and the Law-Mental Health Commission and whose article appears in this newsletter, met with the CRHSP board in May of this year. In his comments to us, he highlighted the need for highly trained psychologists, as experts in psychosocial processes and treatment, to actively participate in the Recovery Model. In this context, recovery involves not only decreasing symptoms but, equally important, achieving a renewed sense of coherence and purpose in life.

Therefore, it may be timely to highlight a continuing education offering by Lawrence Mark Perlman, Ph.D., entitled, "Treatment of Serious Mental Disorders." Although the article was written in 2001, it remains relevant in the current climate of openness to change, given that the role of psychological treatment in recovery by those with serious mental disorders often is neglected in favour of medical interventions (e.g., pharmacological treatment).

Dr. Perlman introduces his topic by discussing the opportunities for early career, as well as seasoned psychologists, to work with those with serious mental disorder. However, he emphasized that "consumers lament the lack of involvement of psychologists" in treatment of this population. He also notes that psychologists generally have abdicated responsibility for the treatment of seriously mentally disordered persons to psychiatrists, in the mistaken belief that serious disorders are only biological in nature and, therefore, can only be treated with medication. However, Dr. Perlman emphasized that behavioural and psychodynamic therapies can be of great help in assisting consumers to understand their life experiences, cope with the demands of their treatment, and develop richer and fuller lives.

.... Continued on next page

... continued from page 1

Based on his own experience in a day treatment program for the chronically mental ill, as well as on his work with chronic patients in private practice, Dr. Perlman describes several types of psychological interventions that, independently and/or in collaboration with other professionals, can result in significant benefit to consumers. These interventions can also be professionally rewarding to psychologists who offer them. Dr. Perlman provides practical advice for offering the following types of interventions:

- **Therapeutic procedures increasing medication compliance**
- **Coping skills for auditory hallucinations**
- **Treating phobic avoidance**
- **Social skills training**
- **Discussing psychotic experiences**
- **Psycho-educational groups**

Carl Jung and others have proposed that meaningful synchronicities often occur in our lives and that we need to be alert to their presence. As I was debating which continuing education article to highlight, and considering Dr. Perlman's paper, I had an opportunity to work with an individual coping with schizophrenia, for whom typically I would have deferred treatment to a psychiatrist. This individual is clearly very well managed medically, and has strong advocates and supports. I was asked to provide the type of coping and social skills training that would supplement his traditional treatment. Buoyed by my reading of Dr. Perlman's article, I ventured into territory that I generally avoid and spent what became highly productive time discussing this individual's past psychotic experiences. I look forward to continuing to incorporate Dr. Perlman's suggestions into my ongoing work with this client.

Through our agreement with the National Register, CRHSP is able to access a considerable number of educational articles, on a wide range of practice-related topics. The selection regularly is updated with new articles. CE credits can be obtained by passing an online exam based on available articles, with a designated pass rate. Scoring feedback is immediate and certificates then can be printed online. As a supplement to in-person continuing education opportunities, these online are an excellent resource in continuing professional development.

THE MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY FOR CANADA CHANGING DIRECTIONS, CHANGING LIVES

A product of the Mental Health Commission of Canada

(This document is available at www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

A COMMENTARY ON THE PARADIGM SHIFT IN TREATING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND ILLNESSES

***The comments contained in this article are the opinion of the author, who purports to speak for no others
Canada needed a plan to change the way this country approaches mental health.***

Mental Health is different from the absence of mental illness, and is integral to our overall health. Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own potential and can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community.

There are many kinds of mental health problems and illnesses. They range from anxiety and depression to schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. The Strategy does not attempt to define the difference between 'problems' and 'illnesses', or to resolve all the controversies surrounding the choice of terminology. Rather, the term 'mental health problems and illnesses' has been intentionally chosen to be respectful of a wide range of views. It refers to the full range of patterns of behaviour, thinking or emotions that bring some level of distress, suffering or impairment in areas such as school, work, social and family interactions or the ability to live independently.



The paradigm in mental health services is shifting. The Strategy promotes the concepts of recovery and well-being. The concept of recovery refers to living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life, even though there are on-going limitations caused by mental health problems and illnesses.

In the recovery model, the primary aim of mental health services is to promote personal recovery and social inclusion. In this model the foundation of a good treatment is a good relationship; not a good diagnosis. The purpose of mental health treatment, including medication is not just to treat mental illness; it is to help people with mental illness have better lives.

In the recovery model, medication would be quality of life goal directed, instead of only symptom relief directed. In the recovery model, there are two experts in mental health within the doctors' office; the doctor and the patient. Medications have played and will continue to play a vital role in the lives of many people living with mental health problems and illnesses. They are an essential part of the full range of options of services, treatments, and support that faster recovery and well-being. Few people suffering a major mental illness recover without the use of medication, and few people recover with the use of medication alone.

Our modern culture, which is heavily reliant on the "quick fix" and access to drug insurance plan efficiencies, has created a "double bind" for psychiatrists trapped in the medical model.

In an essay for the Globe mail newspaper, May 23rd, 2012, Dr. Gili Adler Nevo, a psychiatrist describes the "double bind". After diagnosing a patient with the usual symptoms of depression Dr. Nevo states: "I knew what to do about it. Without the need to delve into the depth of another human soul, I knew what to do, I knew which medication to prescribe, I also knew I could recommend psychotherapy, but I knew she wouldn't be able to afford it.

.... Continued on next page

... continued from page 2

I could not afford to create that sacred place for the soul in which she could untangle her layers, understand the source of her depression and climb out of it. I did not have the time: It was no longer in the culture of my profession. She was just depressed, a simple medical problem requiring a simple pharmacological solution. My soul felt cooped up, restricted. I needed Prozac (and fast)".

Now is the time, for psychology to come to the forefront and advocate for inclusion into the public healthcare plans. If talk therapy is no longer in the culture of a psychiatric practice, a patient should have the right to be treated by a qualified psychologist without additional expense.

The concept of recovery involves choice and control by the patient. The goals are to help people achieve personal recovery; gain a quality of life and create an environment in which recovery can take place and flourish. The voices of psychologists need to be heard at this time by governments to ensure their skills are available to all, notwithstanding wealth or status.

The author thanks and acknowledges the contribution of the authors of the Mental Health Strategy whose material informs a large part of the content of this commentary.

The Honourable
Justice Edward F. Ormston
Ontario Court of Justice
Past Chair, Mental Health and The Law Advisory Committee – MHCC
Chair, Consent and Capacity Board

Helpful Websites

The Psychology Foundation of Canada (PFC) supports parents and families through several initiatives including creating educational resources, developing training programs for professionals, and delivering community-based education.

PFC's programs include Kids Have Stress Too; Parenting for Life (PFL), and Diversity in Action. The PFL program, for example, just published its seventh booklet "Straight Talk About Teens- Realistic ideas and advice for parents of older teenagers". Another recent publication is the booklet "Managing the Sandwich Challenge-Building a Common Family Framework".

To learn more about the Foundation's resources, please visit www.psychologyfoundation.org.

Copyright © 2012, Canadian Register of Health Service
Providers in Psychology. All rights reserved.

